

Despite their great importance for an understanding of the history and administration of the Roman empire during the last half of the first century and the first twelve or thirteen years of the second, Pliny's letters seem not to have been popular in antiquity. Tertullian is the only extant author who makes any reference to them before the fifth century. It is certain, however, that they were preserved in a nine-book collection of *Epistulae ad Amicos* and a separate one-book volume of his correspondence with the emperor Trajan. Two copies of the nine-book corpus which, like the autograph, is no longer in existence, gave rise to all of the existing manuscripts of the first nine books of the *Epistulae*. In an article in *TAPA* 55 (1924) 62-67, Professor Stout maintained that one of these copies gave rise to what are now known as the nine-book and the eight-book families of manuscripts. The other copy in the late fifth century was joined to the correspondence of Trajan and gave rise to the ten-book family of manuscripts.

The arguments for the common origin of the eight-book and the nine-book families are convincingly restated. It is also shown that a common reading from these manuscripts is to be preferred to a reading of the ten-book tradition. In his first chapter, Mr. Stout shows how "careless and unscientific evaluation of the individual sources for the text of these *Letters* has caused most of differences in the text of modern editions" (p. 11). In the second chapter, errors which can be ascribed to the monks who copied the manuscripts are explored; and in the third, the critic is seen making his contributions to the textual confusion. The final chapter discusses disputed readings of the first nine books. I can only presume that variant readings of the tenth book are not discussed in this chapter because of its dependence upon a single manuscript tradition.

In this monograph Mr. Stout has given to the world the wisdom of nearly a lifetime spent on a problem of no slight difficulty. He has furnished all the background for the definitive edition of the *Epistulae*. But more than that, he has given a superb illustration of the proper methods to be employed in textual criticism. Those who have had some experience in the art will profit greatly by his penetrating analysis of the readings and his solutions to the problems. Those who have had no such experience will none the less be able to follow his clear, orderly, and interesting presentation of the matter. For anyone who is editing or translating an ancient author for publication, the book should be required reading.

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P. Maurice Hill, *The Poems of Sappho*. New York, Philosophical Library, 1954. Pp. xiv, 73, xv-xvii. \$6.00.

The present limited edition, rather handsomely printed for the Philosophical Library in Great Britain by Guido Morris in collaboration with Worden (Printers), Limited, Marazion, is a posthumous publication, its author, P. Maurice Hill, having died on August 2, 1952. Intended, seemingly, for the general reader rather than the specialist, it omits sundry of the scholarly appurtenances one would otherwise seek to find. A subhead remarks that the slender volume contains "nearly all the fragments from the restored Greek texts."

The Greek text itself, facing the translations in rhythmic prose, is unusually clear and attractive. The translations, for those content to have Sappho's lines in other than regular English verse, are uniformly well done, though in no sense uniformly inspired. Occasionally the English seems a bit vigorous for the Greek original: as in Hill's frag. 39 (p. 29) and his frag. 76.18 (p. 63). In his frag. 61 (p. 53), *ῥαδιῶς* seems oddly to be taken with *Ἀρροδίαν* rather than with *παῖδος*. Hill's Greek text (p. xvii) is principally that of J. M. Edmonds, *Lyra Graeca* (London 1922) I, "sometimes with slight modifications from other sources." In one case, his frag. 35 (pp. 24-29), Hill omits all indication of preserved text and restoration, remarking that so much of the ode "is conjectural that the translator has deemed it best, for the sake of easier reading, to put the reconstructed text as above."

But, again, the obvious thought of the general rather than the scholarly reader is here in mind. Somewhat more puzzling, however, is Hill's complete omission of standard numberings of the fragments. He has employed his own numberings only—one through ninety-five, grouped under eight headings: invocation, love poems, companions, Atthis, nature poems, Hector and Andromache, general poems, biographical poems. The introduction (pp. ix-xiv) deals with

ancient *testimonia* to the poetess; the appendices (pp. xvii-xxii) include notes on the translations, classical appreciation of Sappho, acknowledgments, and a bibliography.

Some readers will wish the translator had ventured into an occasional English reproduction of the original meters, especially the sapphic strophe. Yet the volume will find a deserved place in the all too limited literature on the great Lesbian poetess.

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